

By **STUART EARP: Wycombe Wanderers 1, Woking 0**

HAVING played some of their poorest football of the season against Woking on Saturday, Wycombe Wanderers looked to be heading for a goalless draw at Loakes Park as this Rothmans Isthmian League match entered the third minute of injury time. But then Dylan Evans scored from close range to give the Blues a lucky victory that keeps them clear at the top of Division One.

Despite creating more chances, Wanderers scarcely deserved to take maximum points from this encounter and poor Woking must have been shattered not only by the goal but by the length of time referee Brian Robinson allowed on at the end. It could only have been for time wasting.

We have come to expect only the best from the Blues at Loakes Park and when things go wrong on the field the spectators are quick to show their feelings. But they had good reason to moan on Saturday for the Blues never got their game together at all, despite having a greater percentage of play.

Mistakes accounted for much of the frustration but the number of back passes from midfield, which slowed many attacks to a stand-still suggested a general lack of confidence in going forward. Once again Wanderers should give their defence a bonus this week, for the back four were as solid as ever and I don't think goalkeeper John Maskell had a difficult save to make. The midfield men were disappointing, however, and seemed to lack ideas

CRACKING START

Conditions weren't easy at Loakes Park and the pitch, soaked by Friday's rain, was soon cutting up. Even so, it was one of the few grounds to withstand the soaking, as several Division One games were called off. Howard Kennedy returned from Tuesday's side while Peter Cruse was made sub. Dylan

Evans came in for Tony Horseman.

John Priestley got the game off to a cracking start after only 25 seconds when he half volleyed Derek Cotterill's clearance only inches over the crossbar.

The first of several clear cut chances came Wycombe's way after eight minutes — but this one, like the rest, was wasted with only the goalkeeper to beat. Steve Hill's suicidal back pass was picked up by Howard Kettleborough who had only 'keeper John Overton to beat from eight yards but screwed the ball well wide.

Evans crashed a shot over the top in the 18th minute and Wycombe began to lose their early rhythm as the errors mounted. Despite Wanderers' frustrations, Woking were unable to capitalise and this also brought down the standard of the first half.

Hopes of a second half improvement were raised in the second minute when Mick Holifield produced a brilliant run onto Ian Pearson's clever flick. Mick beat one defender and went past Graham Cooper who slipped. It seemed he had done all the difficult work but then ruined it all by driving wide with only Overton to beat.

Woking retaliated with two quick corners while former Wanderer Dave Alexander looked a menace in his new position up front. But it was the Blues who created the best chances.

One of the best opportunities came in the 58th minute. Kettleborough put Holifield through again with Evans at his shoulder. This time Mick pushed the ball too far and it struck Overton. The ball came out to

Pearson but he too was foiled by the body of Overton who blocked the effort at point blank range.

Four consecutive Wycombe corners came to nothing and manager Ted Powell must have been desperate when he decided to call off his target man Kettleborough in the 63rd minute. Cruse went on up front.

Despite their general troubles, Wycombe still carved out the odd chance and in the 68th minute they missed yet again with only the goalkeeper to beat. Paul Birdseye lofted in a free kick to Pearson who had a clear shooting chance from only a couple of yards out. But again, Overton was able to block the shot.

Wycombe would be well advised to practise this one-against-one situation for missed chances of this sort could cost them dearly.

Woking took the game to the home side in the last quarter and Alexander was not far away in the 79th minute when he ran well to take Jim Godfrey's pass but then blazed the ball wide.

It looked all over for Wycombe as we entered injury time, but Priestley almost snatched a winner when his 18 yard drive was tipped over by Overton. Pearson hurried to take the corner with the seconds ticking by. Over came the cross and for once Overton missed the ball which fell conveniently at the feet of Evans, two yards out. Dylan pushed the ball over the line to give Wycombe a win they hardly deserved.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, K. Mead, A. Phillips, R. Davies; H. Kennedy, J. Priestley, M. Holifield; I. Pearson, H. Kettleborough (sub P. Cruse 63 mins), D. Evans.

WOKING: J. Overton; M. Stratford, R. Poole, M. Whatford, G. Cooper; A. Brown, D. Cotterill, J. Godfrey; S. Hill (sub J. McMorran 70 mins), A. Morton, D. Alexander.

Referee: B. Robinson.

Half-time: 0-0. **Goalscorer,** Wycombe — Evans (93).

Attendance: 1,400.